

## **CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY**

Meeting: 12 March 2009  
At: 2.30pm

### **PRESENT**

Councillor Sue Derbyshire (Chair) in the Chair; Councillors Shan Alexander, Chris Baker, Peter Burns, Martin Candler, Bryan Leck, John Pantall and Peter Scott.

### **Also in attendance**

Barry Khan - Service Director (Legal & Property), Business Services Directorate  
Mike Iveson - Head of Committee Services, Chief Executive's Directorate  
Chris Braithwaite - Democratic Services Officer, Chief Executive's Directorate

### **1. MINUTES**

The minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 5 March 2009 were approved as a correct record.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

- (i) CP4 - Update, Confidential Reporting Policy ("Whistleblowing")

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a revision to CP4 - Confidential Reporting Policy ("Whistleblowing") for the approval of the Working Party in accordance with the resolution of the Working Party at its meeting on 2 October 2008.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Council Meeting be recommended to adopt the amended CP4 - Confidential Reporting Policy ("Whistleblowing"), subject to the removal of names of individual officers from Paragraph 7.5 to avoid the need to update the constitution in the event of an officer leaving.

(2) That the Corporate Director, Children & Young People be asked to confirm that confidential reporting arrangements for school based staff are in place (paragraph 1.4. refers)

- (ii) Referrals from Area Committees - Planning Officer Recommendations for Site Visits

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a report (copies of which were circulated) providing the Working Party with a response to the request of Bramhall Area Committee that the Working Party consider an amendment to the planning scheme of delegation to Area Committees so that applications recommended by officers for a site visit did not prevent

the Area Committees from determining the application without being referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee.

RESOLVED – (1) That the response and reasons contained therein for applications which are the subject of site visits being determined by the Planning & Highways regulation Committee be noted.

(2) That whilst the Working Party appreciates the concerns of Area Committee members it is not necessary to amend the planning scheme of delegation to Area Committees for the reasons outlined in the report.

(3) That the Chair of the Planning & Highways Regulation Committee be requested to monitor the frequency with which applications are recommended by officers for a site visit.

(iii) Financial Procedure Rules

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a response from the Chief Internal Auditor (copies of which had been circulated) with regard to the Working Party's resolution that the Service Director (Finance) be requested to provide clarification on reasons for the removal of the phrase 'reporting service' from paragraph 18.1 of the Financial Procedure Rules.

RESOLVED – That the response be noted.

(iv) Duration of Council Meetings

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a general amendment to Council Meeting Procedure Rule 9 of the Constitution (copies of which had been circulated) relating to the duration of Council Meetings.

RESOLVED – That the Service Director (Legal & Property) be requested to submit a further report to the next meeting of the Working Party with regard to potential changes to the Council Meeting Procedure Rules.

#### **4. POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Service Director (Legal & Property) submitted a report (copies of which were circulated) requesting the Working Party to consider reviewing the existing Policy Framework contained within the Constitution.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Council Meeting be recommended to remove the following documents from the list of Policy Framework items in Article 4 of the Constitution:

- Education Plan
- Anti-poverty strategy
- Community Development Strategy
- Community Strategy
- Connexions Strategy
- Corporate Youth Strategy

- Economic Development Strategy
- Environmental Action Plan
- Housing Strategy for Stockport
- Human Resources Strategy
- ICT Strategy
- Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Supporting People Strategy
- Sure Start Plan
- Town Centre/M60 Gateway Strategy
- Valuing Greenspace
- Waste Management Strategy

(2) That where appropriate, the content of plans and strategies now deleted from the Policy Framework be amalgamated into or combined with the Council Plan or remaining Policy Framework documents.

## **5. CONSULTATION ON CHANGING COUNCIL GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) seeking a response from the Constitution Working Party to a consultation on changing Council Governance arrangements undertaken by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

The Working Party made a number of minor amendments to the draft response

RESOLVED – That the Executive Councillor (Communities) be recommended to respond to the consultation in accordance with the draft response as amended.

## **6. SCRUTINY ISSUES**

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) requesting the Working Party to consider changes to the Constitution necessary as a result of Part V of the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 being brought into force from 1 April 2009.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy, Performance & Governance) be requested to submit a draft protocol for Councillor Call For Action to the next meeting of the Working Party.

## **7. AGENDA PLANNING AND FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED – That the meeting of the Working Party scheduled to take place on Monday, 16 March 2009 at 10.00am be cancelled.

The meeting closed at 3.43pm.